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"Review: Eli FRANCO (ed.), *The Spitzer Manuscript: The Oldest Philosophical Manuscript in Sanskrit*, 2 vols."



Eli Franco (ed.), *The Spitzer Manuscript: The Oldest Philosophical Manuscript in Sanskrit*, 2 Vols., Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse Denkschriften 323 Band, Beiträge zur Kultur- und Geistesgeschichte Asiens Nr. 43, Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2004, xii + 510 Pp. € 139. (Paperback)

The third Prussian expedition (December 1905 to June 1907), headed by Albert Grünwedel together with Albert von le Coq and Th. Bartus, reached the western oases, for instance, Kuca, Kumtura, and Kyzil; however, by the middle of 1906 Le Coq had to return to Germany because of his health. Therefore, it was during a very short period that they discovered a cache of Sanskrit manuscripts along with those of several Central Asian languages at Kyzil, where one of the biggest complexes of Buddhist caves was found. As to the place of discovery, it is reported that most of the manuscripts had “been discovered in the so-called Rotkuppelraum (“room of the red cupola”) in the Ming-öi (“thousand caves”) near Kyzil, or, more precisely, in a small room adjacent to it” (vol. 1: Introduction p. 1). “The so-called Rotkuppelraum” was according to Le Coq “ein alte Bibliothek” (an old library) and preserved a number of Indian manuscripts written on palmleaf, birchbark, and paper. These materials were later dispatched to Berlin and inspected by a team headed by H. Pischel (after his death, Heinrich Lüders took on this responsibility). Among them, the so-called “Spitzer manuscript” (this designation was given by Dieter Schlingloff “in homage of the German-Jewish scholar Moritz Spitzer (1900-1982), who in 1927-28 was the first to work on it” (vol. 1: Introduction p. 3) was included. It is catalogued as SHT Nr. 810 and consists of more than one thousand broken fragments; the total number of folios is unknown but according to a surviving folio number (which is number higher than 400) “we cannot be sure that the manuscript contained only ca. 420 folios” (vol. I: Introduction, p. 27). Its date is presumed by Franco to be the second half of the third century. (Franco further investigates this by using the scientific method. See below.)

Unfortunately, Spitzer never published his study of this manuscript and he subsequently disappeared from the world of Indology and Buddhism (see vol. I: Preface, pp. ix-xii). Later a Japanese scholar, Shōkō Watanabe, who was at that time working with Ernst Leumann, studied it in the early 1930’s and made hand-copies of some of the fragments (a part of his copy, one side of a fragment which is now lost, was reproduced in Miyasaka [1962] (“Kyōryōbu no danpen” [Fragments of Sautrāntika], *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 10: 637-679) and is included in *The Spitzer Manuscript*, vol. I as Appendix 4). Although Watanabe himself did not publish any paper on this manuscript, his hand-copies were entrusted to Prof. Yūshō Miyasaka. Prof. Miyasaka was the first scholar who inspected the text of the fragments themselves and published papers on this manuscript (through Watanabe’s hand-copies) by comparing the fragments with the Chinese translation of an Abhidharma-text, i.e., the \**Satyasiddhiśāstra* by Harivarman (Taishō No. 1646, vol. 32). In conclusion, Prof. Miyasaka inferred that this manuscript might have belonged to the Sautrāntikas, especially reflecting

its early period (Miyasaka [1962: 679]) although Franco does not agree with this assumption (Franco summarizes Prof. Miyasaka's research in vol. I: Introduction, pp. 4-8).

After published two papers on this manuscript, Prof. Miyasaka seems to have entrusted the copies to another Japanese scholar, Prof. Junkinchi Imanishi; the latter again gave the hand-copies back to Watanabe's son. Franco tried to make contact with Prof. Shigeaki Watanabe, who was expected to publish his father's copies, but failed. Therefore, the details and whereabouts of Shōkō Watanabe's hand-copies, being a good witness of this manuscript in the early 1930's and which are expected to contain copies of "fragments which are now lost and not available even in Spitzer's transcriptions," are still not known (see in detail vol. I: Preface, p. viii).

D. Schlingloff studied this manuscript and published two papers in 1968 and 1969 but his interest seems to go towards something different from that of Buddhologist. He paid much attention to some words found in the text of Spitzer Manuscript, namely the names of some chapter titles of the *Mahābhārata* and dealt with them in the history of Indian literature (for Schlingloff's study, see vol. I: Introduction, pp. 8-10).

After Schlingloff, there seems to be no one who could actually carry on any study of this manuscript. This unfortunate situation for academic research is probably due to inaccessibility of this material. However, thanks to Eli Franco, who noticed the importance of this manuscript and started his research on it, this old manuscript of the Kuṣāṇa period is making its appearance again. Franco was successful in communicating with the family of the late Moritz Spitzer and found Spitzer's Nachlass which preserved the transcription of the manuscript done by Spitzer in 1927-28. Finally, in 2004, Franco was able to publish "The Spitzer Manuscript" reproducing almost all the fragments which are available to him in the form of scanned and later digitized images in B/W, along with their transcriptions below each images (the reasons why Franco published this book in this way are described in Preface, p. xii).

*The Spitzer Manuscript* consists of the following sections:

Volume I:

Preface (p. vii-)

Introduction (p. 1-)

Reproduction and Transliteration of Fragments (p. 47-)

Appendix 1: Lost Fragments (p. 314-)

Appendix 2: Fragments from the Berezovsky Collection (p. 331-)

Appendix 3: Fragments by Different Hands (p. 337-)

Appendix 4: Previously Published Hand-Copies (p. 352-)

Volume II:

Concordances (p. 353-)

Table of akṣaras (p. 371-)

Word Index (p. 381-)

Towards a Reconstruction of the Spitzer Manuscript (p. 435-)

Index of Fragments in the Reconstruction (p. 506-)

Abbreviations and Bibliography (p. 507-)

Since this publication, Franco has continued his research and has published the following paper:

Eli Franco [2006] “Three Notes on the Spitzer Manuscript,” in: *Wiener Zeitschrift die Kunde Südasiens* XLIX/2005: 109-111.

In this short paper, he reports the result of Carbon-14 dating test done on “five manuscripts of the Berlin Turfan Collection, three of which belong to the Kuṣāṇa period” (Franco [2006: 109]). According to this scientific test, the date of SHT Nr. 810 “turned out to be CE 130; individual testing results varied between CE 80 and 230” [do.] He assigned a different date to this manuscript in the present book, based mainly on palaeographical considerations placing it “around the second half of the third century” (vol. I: Introduction, pp. 32-33). Therefore, Franco [2006: 109] says: “I can easily accept the later 14C date of 230, but am somehow reluctant to accept the calibrated date of 130 without further evidence.” The second note is information given by Lore Sander, a well-known paleographer: the British Library preserves five more fragments of the Spitzer manuscript and these fragments are catalogued under Or[iental Number] 15005.<sup>1</sup>

Among the Appendices in *The Spitzer Manuscript*, Appendix 1 is of prime importance. This appendix consists of the reproduction of Spitzer’s Nachlass which has not been available to us until now and, as Franco himself states, it gives us two valuable pieces of information: first, with the help of Spitzer’s transcription Franco could combine several fragments together into one folio; and second, Spitzer’s Nachlass has preserved the transcription of “a large number of fragments which must have been lost or destroyed during the war” (vol. I, p. 314).<sup>2</sup> Some of the lost fragments were transcribed by Watanabe but, as noted above, details concerning his copies are unavailable.<sup>3</sup> Therefore, it is only Spitzer’s Nachlass that provides us with information concerning the lost/destroyed/broken fragments. (What is disappointing is that since Spitzer’s transcription conventions seem to have been inconsistent, it is difficult to discern the number of illegible/unknown akṣaras without photos.)

In this short comment on this publication, I would like to emphasize the significance of the facsimile publication. Recently, we have witnessed a number of the publication of original materials, not only newly found or identified manuscripts but also manuscripts which had been used for ‘critical’ editions published earlier, for Indology and Buddhist studies. To enumerate some of the facsimile editions of the original materials, which are mainly the Buddhist scriptures in Sanskrit and related languages,<sup>4</sup> we have now the publications of the Gāndhāran texts from “Early Buddhist Manuscripts Project” by The British

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1 The present reviewer is ready to present the transliteration of those five fragments soon.

2 Franco says: “some 40(!) lost fragments,” (Preface, p. vii).

3 Correction. On p. 314, line 14: Read Y. Miyasaka instead of “Sh. Miyasaka.”

4 The following list of publication is certainly by no means complete.

Library and University of Washington,<sup>5</sup> the Buddhist manuscripts from the Schøyen Collection,<sup>6</sup> the Sanskrit manuscripts in China by the Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism at Taishō University,<sup>7</sup> the Sanskrit manuscripts from the Ōtani Collection by Ryūkoku University,<sup>8</sup> the Sanskrit manuscripts of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* from “Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series” by the Soka Gakkai,<sup>9</sup> the Central Asian manuscripts in the Stein/Hoernle Collection from the “British Library Sanskrit Fragments” series by The British Library and The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University,<sup>10</sup> and so on. Needless to say, we cannot forget the achievement of the long-term project in Germany, namely “Katalogisierung der Orientalischen Handschriften in Deutschland,” especially the publication of “SHT = Sanskrit-

<sup>5</sup> Richard Salomon, *A Gāndhārī Version of the Rhinoceros Sūtra: British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragment 5B*, Studies in Gandhāran Buddhist Texts 1, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2000; Mark Allon, *Three Gāndhārī Ekottarikāgama-Type Sūtras: British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments 12 and 14*, Gandhāran Buddhist Texts 2, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2001; Timothy Lenz, *A New Version of the Gāndhārī Dharmapada and A Collection of Previous Birth Stories: British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments 16 25*, Gandhāran Buddhist Texts 3, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2002.

<sup>6</sup> Ed. by Jens Braarvig (gen. ed.), *Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection. Buddhist Manuscripts 1*, Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection 1, Oslo: Hermes Publishing 2000; *Buddhist Manuscripts 2*. Manuscripts in the Schøyen Collection 3, Oslo: Hermes Publishing, 2002.

<sup>7</sup> The publications of the facsimile of Sanskrit manuscripts from the Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism at Taisho University are chronologically as follows: *The Facsimile Edition of the Śrāvaka bhūmi Sanskrit Palm-leaf Manuscript* (1994), *The Facsimile Edition of the Amoghapāśakalparāja Sanskrit Palm-leaf Manuscript* (1997), *The Facsimile Edition of the Abhisamācārika-Dharma of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin* (1998), *The Facsimile Edition of a Collection of Sanskrit Palm-leaf Manuscripts in Tibetan dBu med Script* (2001), and *The Facsimile Edition of the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa and Jñānālokālamkāra* (2005).

<sup>8</sup> *Facsimile Series of Rare Texts in the Library of Ryūkoku University*. Sanskrit manuscripts are published Nos. 6 (*Sanskrit Manuscripts of the Sukhāvati-vyūha from Nepal*, 1986), 9 (*Sanskrit Manuscripts of the Buddhist Sūtras from Nepal*, 1990), and 14 (*Sanskrit Manuscripts of the Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra from Nepal*, 1995) in above series. Later, in 2000, the Institute for the Study of Buddhist Culture at Ryūkoku University published a CD-ROM edition of the Sanskrit Buddhist manuscripts under the title of *Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Otani Collection at Ryūkoku University Library* (CD-ROM edition, fourteen CD-ROMs).

<sup>9</sup> Facsimile editions of the manuscripts are as follows: *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript From the National Archives of Nepal* (No. 4-21). Facsimile Edition (No. 4-21), Tokyo: Soka Gakkai (Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 2-1), 1998; Jiang Zhongxin, *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Fragments from the Lüshun Museum Collection. Facsimile Edition and Romanized Text*, Lüshun Museum/Soka Gakkai, 1997; Klaus Wille, *Fragments of a Manuscript of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīkasūtra from Khādaliq*, Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 3, Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2000; *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript From Cambridge University Library (Add. 1682 and Add. 1683) Facsimile Edition*, Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 4, Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2002. Transliterations are published as Hirofumi Toda, *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from the National Archives of Nepal (No. 4-21): Romanized Text 1*, Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 2-2, Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2001; do., *Romanized Text 2*, Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 2-3, Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2004; Haruaki Kotsuki, *Sanskrit Lotus Sutra Manuscript from University of Tokyo General Library (No. 414) Romanized Text*, Lotus Sutra Manuscript Series 5, Tokyo: Soka Gakkai, 2003. Cf. <http://www.iop.org.jp/>

<sup>10</sup> Ed. by Seishi Karashima and Klaus Wille, *Buddhist Manuscripts from Central Asia: The British Library Sanskrit Fragments*, vol. 1, Tokyo: The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2006.

handschriften aus den Turfanfunden.” However, although nine volumes have been published in this series since 1965 and the transliterations of even tiny fragments are given along with textual notes, the facsimiles are not always included.<sup>11</sup> Therefore, Franco’s publication of the Spitzer Manuscript, which is one of the oldest materials in the Turfan Collection, should be regarded very highly.

Notwithstanding its value, it is small wonder that this publication has been criticized for not reconstructing the text as a whole, not comparing it with the other materials such as Chinese and Tibetan texts, not publishing the images in colour, etc. Certainly, we have much still to do with this manuscript. As seen in the images, since this manuscript is so fragmentary and no parallels have been found in any language, even to establish the pagination or to place the fragments in sequence is extremely laborious (in fact, impossible). Now, we have a number of electronic versions of the Buddhist and Indian texts not only in Sanskrit but also in Chinese or Tibetan on the internet. We can easily make an online search for a single word. Therefore, once the original materials become available, it is partly the reader’s task to promote the scholarship in this field. Indeed, to deal with manuscripts is, needless to say, painstaking and time-consuming as well; there are a number of manuscripts and fragments which are forgotten and difficult to access. We should welcome Franco’s work as undoubtedly contributing to our academic world and enriching materials on our desk.

\* I would like to express my thanks to Prof. Jan Nattier who checked my unidiomatic English. Any errors that remain here, of course, are my own.

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<sup>11</sup> SHT. Teil I: Unter Mitarbeit von W. Clawiter und L. Holzmann hrsg. und mit einer Einleitung versehen von E. Waldschmidt, Wiesbaden 1965 (VOHD Bd.X, 1); Teil II: Faksimile-Wiedergaben einer Auswahl von Vinaya- und Sūtrahandschriften nebst einer Bearbeitung davon noch nicht publizierter Stücke im Verein mit W. Clawiter und L. Sander-Holzmann zusammengestellt von E. Waldschmidt, Wiesbaden, 1968 (VOHD Bd. X, 2); Teil III: Die Katalognummern 802-1014, unter Mitarbeit von W. Clawiter und L. Sander-Holzmann hrsg. von E. Waldschmidt, Wiesbaden, 1971 (VOHD Bd. X, 3); Teil IV: Ergänzungsband zu Teil 1-3 mit Textwiedergaben, Berichtigungen und Wörterzeichnissen bearbeitet von L. Sander und E. Waldschmidt, Wiesbaden, 1980 (VOHD Bd. X, 4); Teil V: Die Katalognummern 1015-1202 und 63 vorweggenommene höhere Nummern bearbeitet von L. Sander und E. Waldschmidt, Stuttgart, 1985 (VOHD Bd. X, 5); Teil VI: Die Katalognummern 1202-1599, Hrsg. von Heinz Bechert, Beschrieben von Klaus Wille, Stuttgart, 1989 (VOHD Bd.X, 6); Teil VII: Die Katalognummern 1600-1799, Hrsg. von H. Bechert, Beschrieben von K. Wille, Stuttgart, 1995 (VOHD Bd. X, 7); Teil VIII: Die Katalognummern 1800-1999, Hrsg. von H. Bechert, Beschrieben von K. Wille, Stuttgart, 2000 (VOHD Bd. X, 8); Teil IX: Die Katalognummern 2000-3199, Hrsg. von H. Bechert, Beschrieben von K. Wille, Stuttgart, 2004 (VOHD Bd. X, 9). See also E. Waldschmidt, *Faksimile-Wiedergaben von Sanskrithandschriften aus den Berliner Turfanfunden I: Handschriften zu fünf SĒtras des Dirghāgama*, Unter Mitarbeit von W. Clawiter, D. Schlingloff und R.L. Waldschmidt hrsg., The Hague, 1963.